

How to Train Your Human

by chrystaljadeflower

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Summary: The story of Toothless's childhood, and eventually the How to Train Your Dragon trilogy from his perspective.

## 1. Chapter 1

\_How to Train your Human\_

### Chapter One

**\*\*A/N:Just to make it clear, this is the story of Toothless's childhood and, later, the \*\***

**\*\*How to Train your Dragon movie from his perspective. Oh, and also, writing \*\***

**\*\*that's in Italics are Toothless's thoughts, writing in both Italics and Bold is \*\***

**\*\*dragon speech, and Viking speech is regular writing.\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>The first thing I remember? Claustrophobia. The first few seconds weren't that bad,<p>

but it soon escalated into full scale panic, as I realized that I was cramped inside a

strange small dark place, and that I wanted out. I started pushing against the wall of

the place, but it wouldn't give, even though I could feel a strange sensation as if the

space was rolling on its side. I could hear noises outside somewhere,

all of them

rough, with a generous amount of hissing thrown in. Then, I heard another, male

voice cutting through the others:

\*\*\_"What's he doing? It'll be weeks before he's ready to come out."\_\*\*

\_Weeks? WEEKS? I can't wait that long!\_

\*\*\_"True, but he's a feisty one, no doubt!" \_\*\*Hmm. This one was smoother, and female. Not that I cared.

I started thrashing around, trying to break through. Then, the oddest thing

happened. There was a strange noise, like I had hiccupped, and the space started

light up with purple, except it didn't stay still. It whizzed around the place,

bouncing off the walls, and thenâ€|

BOOM!

I was out! Andâ€|I was falling off a cliff?

A completely jet-black dragon with silver eyes leapt off the cliff, dived, and caught me. He put me back on the cliff edge amid a great tide of whispers and murmurs.

\*\*\_"How can this be? He's only been in the egg for\_ \_two months!"\_\*\*

\*\* \_"Did you see that? When the egg exploded, it looked almost like a plasma blast!"\_\*\*

Then, a reddish-brown dragon, barely larger than myself, wriggled his way into the front. \*\*\_"That's the great new Night Fury we've all been waiting for? Just look at him!"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Shh, Ignis, "\_\*\*said a deep blue dragon with a white splotch on her head, who had slowly approached in the time since I came out, \*\*\_"You cannot judge by size. But \_\_how is the hatchling? Have you decided on a name for the\_\*\* \_\*\*ceremony?"\*\* \_ It took a moment to register that she was talking about me.

Another completely black dragon came over and looked me over with lustrous yellow eyes. Then she turned back to the dragon lady. \_"N\*\*o, and I really don't know, Moon. He seems fineâ€|but why did he hatch so early? \*\*\_\*\* \_And what are we supposed to do, I'm only halfway through decorating his sleeping \_ \_corner, andâ€| and we're not even on Hatchling Island!"\_\*\*

\_Sleeping corner? I get my own sleeping corner? What is a sleeping corner, anyway? Is it\_ \_a corner that sleeps all day? \_

\*\*\_"It's okay,"\_\*\* Moon soothed, \*\*\_"You don't need to be on Hatchling Island to hatch properly. I mean, sure, there are shallow pools of water to muffle egg explosions, and to practice swimming, and lots of wide open spaces for practicing flying and running, and,"\_\*\* Moon continued, with the other dragon looking more despairing by the second, \*\*\_"And there are lots of easy-to-catch fish, for fishing practice, and other hatchling dragons for companyâ€|ohâ€| I'm not helping, am I?"\_\*\*

While Moon and the other dragon kept talking about hatchling nutrition and possible hatchling names, the first dragon, the one with silver eyes, came over and sort of picked me up by the scruff of my neck and carried me over to a little circle of scorched rock andâ€|threw up some bits of fish next to me.

\_I'm\_\_ supposed to eat that?\_ He nodded and made a sort of pleased rumbling noise, like a purr, almost. \*\*\_"I'm sorry that it's only cod. I meant to get some salmon for your first fish, butâ€|well \_\*\*\_\*\*you'll just have to make do."\*\*\_He seemed to think for a second, then leaned toward me. \*\*\_"Can youâ€|talk yet?"\_\*\* I blinked and tried to translate my thoughts into moving my mouth.

\*\*\_"Yeeâ€|eez?"\_\*\* I said confusedly. He smiled. \*\*\_"Maybe not yet then."\_\*\*

My mother and the blue dragon were talking even louder now. I pricked my ears. \*\*\_"Yes, but what does this mean, Moon? He shouldn't have been born this early, much less at the nest!"\_\*\*

Moon flicked her ears. \*\*\_"Did you see that purple flash when he came out? That was a plasma blast, nearly impossible at this age. I think it means this was supposed to happen, andâ€|"\_\*\*Her voice grew softer so that I couldn't hear.

My mother nodded. \*\*\_"Yesâ€|"\_\*\*She turned toward my father. \*\*\_"We should go to\_ \_Hatchling Island for the naming ceremony."\_\*\*

My father stood up. \*\*\_"Yes, I think we should. Do you think we ought to bring the other two eggs, Jet?"\_\*\*

She frowned.\*\*\_ "I suppose we could bring all three of them, and just stay there until the two other eggs hatchâ€|but how would we bring him?"\_\*\*She motioned toward me, \*\*\_"I mean, could he just sit on one of our backs? It feels dangerous, somehowâ€|"\_\*\*

\_Whee! Go faster!\_ My father's back shifted beneath me as he readjusted his grip on one of my sibling's eggs.

We'd been flying for over an hour, and it was exhilarating.  
>I twisted around too look at my wings. They were black and lithe, but pretty small. Would I ever be able to fly like this?<br>\_\*\*"Don't move around too much,"\*\*\_ my father snorted. \*\*\_"You'll just fall off, and then you'll have to learn to fly pretty quickly."\_\*\*

I bounced excitedly. \*\*\_"So, if I fall off I'll learn to fly? Can I fall off then?"\_\*\*

\_\*\*"No,"\*\*\_ he said flatly. \_\*\*"Oh, here we areâ€|"\*\*\_

I stretched to look up over his head and leaned forward, flattening my father's ear flaps. There was an island dead ahead that was curved like a c around a rainbow bay, deep blue in the center, but turning yellow and red around the edges. It was a paradise.

>We touched down right at the tip of the c, next to some strangely small pools of water, some with bubbles rising up from the surface. I toppled off my father's back and started to head over to the pools, which now had newborn Gronckles spilling out of it.<p>

\_How strangeâ€|Do Gronckles love swimming so very much?\_

\*\*\_"Come back here! Don't wander off!"\_\*\*My mother bounded over and started to nudge me back over the little nest my parents had started making.

\*\*\_"But Momâ€|why are there so many Gronckles in the water? When can I go swimming?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Mmm, maybe laterâ€|"\_\*\* She muttered between wide licks around my head and neck.

>She then stepped back and surveyed me with satisfaction.

<strong><em>"You seem clean enough, but I wish I had time to give you a bathâ€|"<em>\*\* She shook her head, \*\*\_"No matter.\_\*\*\_\*\*Now just wait here until one of comes to get you, ok?"\*\*\_

She bounded away to a kind of ledge that stuck straight out from the cliff, where my dad already was. The ledge stuck over a largeish crowd of Night Furies.

><em><strong>"Welcome, fellow Night Furies. We gather today to give a name to one of our ownâ€|"<strong>\_

I listened for a second, before realizing that this was my chance! I crept away from my parents voices toward one of the strange Gronckle pools I'd seen earlier. It had many bubbles rising, but no Gronckles. Disappointed, I turned awayâ€|

When a round blue rock caught my eye.

It was a sort of oval, with lumpy stubby spikes emanating from its surface, and was lying on its side a few inches from one of the other pools. But its oddest feature was the smell it gave off. It smelt a sort of tangy smell that I had associated with the other dragons in the nest, but that couldn't be right. If there was one thing that this strange rock wasn't, it was a dragon.

\_I should probably go back nowâ€|\_

I could hear my parents talking about their reason for my name, something about plasma blasts and gods and prophecies.

\_Waitâ€|What's it doi-Aaah!\_

The rock, which had started smoke and hiss alarmingly a second before, with fiery red lines etching themselves across its bumpy surface, had exploded!

\_Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhh!\_

I was thrown nearly halfway back to spot I had originally been in,

listening to my parents voices. The breath was knocked out of lungs as I hit the hard, orangey rock.

\_Wow, I'm actually pretty alright for someone who was standing right in front of an exploding roc-OOF\_

Honestly, I'd never given that much thought to Gronckles in general, but now I realized that they were probably the HUGEST, HEAVIEST dragons in the WHOLE WORLD!

>A Gronckle had fallen out of the air on top of me!<p>

\_Ow, there goes the rib cage. Ow, goodnight spleen.\_

\*\*\_"Hey! There is a time for making friends, but it is not now!"\_\*\*

\_Who was that? Am I in Valhalla?\_

The Gronckle rolled off of meâ€|and in the second before I saw the angry Mom standing to my left, I saw the yellow-green Gronckle and thought, she looks friendly.

>And then I was jerked back to reality.<p>

\_\*\*"Honestly! Come on, we need to go on with the naming ceremony!"\*\*\_She nudged me to my paws and surveyed me critically.

><strong><em>"All that licking, down the drainâ€|I suppose I'll have to make doâ€|But you better expect something for this later, mister!"<em>\*\*

>She nudged me along to the ledge in front of the crowd of Night Fury's.<p>

\*\*\_"And now"\_ \*\*My father said, addressing me, \*\*\_"\_\_In accordance to the Ancient laws, I name you...NÃ³tt."\_\*\*

I found my voice.

\*\*\_"Not? You're not going to name me?"\_\*\*I said confusedly.

\_\*\*"No, N-Ã³-t-t. NÃ³tt. That's your name. After the goddess of night, whose grandchild was Thor."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Oh."\*\*\_

\_NÃ³ttâ€| NÃ³tt. Blech. It sounds awful.\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: Okay, so in case there's someone out there who doesn't understand, this is a summary of the chapter:\*\*

\*\*\*NÃ³tt, A.K.A Toothless, panics and plasma blasts his way out of his egg, hatching a month early. Him and his parents fly to Hatchling Island, the place where most dragons hatch. His parents start the naming ceremony, but while that is going on, Toothless (it feels wrong to call him \*\*NÃ³tt...) sneaks away and is literally blown away by an exploding Gronckle egg, which is how most dragons hatch. His mother catches him and brings him back to complete the ceremony, and is named \*\*\*NÃ³tt.\*\*

**\*\*Also, 'Valhalla' is the Viking version of Heaven.\*\***

**\*\*As a heads up, i'm going to try to write movies How to Train Your Dragon 1,2 & 3 from Toothless's perspective, so this is going to be a long story.\*\***

**\*\*And, I'm sorry there's only one chapter. I know how annoying it is to read something and then find out there's only one chapter.\*\***

**\*\*Okay? Okay!\*\***

## 2. Chapter 2

### Chapter 2

**\*\*A/N: Woohoo! This must be some kind of record! Posted Chapter One at ten in the morning, posted Chapter Two at eleven at night, same day! Of course, I probably owe it to my twin sister/co-writer/editor! Also, I do not own How to Train Your Dragon 1, 2 or 3, or any of its characters.\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p><em><strong>"Are they hatching yet?"<strong> \_I bounced over to my mother.

Her ears twitched. **\*\*\_"How likely would that be, in the ten minutes since you last asked me?"\_\*\***

I sat back. **\*\*\_"Is that a no?"\_ \*\***

**\*\*\_"Yes, go play with your friends and leave me alone." \_\*\***She whisked her tail at me. I jumped out of the way and bounded back towards Firewing. Even though he was technically younger than me, as a Gronckle he was still a lot heavier.

**\*\*\_"Hey! Watch this!" \_\*\***he called. He shook himself and spulched out about an eggful of lava.

**\*\*\_"Wow!"\_\*\*** I hopped out of the way and looked at the fiery pool in awe. **\*\*\_"That's the most ever!"\_\*\***

Firewing's eyes gleamed mischievously. **\*\*\_"I bet you can't do anything like that, \_\_NÃ³tt!"\_\*\***

I whapped him with my wing. **\*\*\_"Don't call me that. It sounds stupid."\_\*\***

**\*\*\_"Why would it? It's the name of the goddess of darkness and night!"\_\*\***

**\*\*\_"Exactly! It's the name of a goddess! A GODDESS! And I'm a boy!"\_\*\***

**\*\*\_"Sheesh, you don't have to get so worked up about it. But what am I supposed to call you? Oh, and by the way, can you do the plasma blast thing? Because I've never actually seen you do it."\_\*\***

I squirmed uncomfortably. \*\*\_"About the name, I don't knowâ€|for the plasma blastâ€|well, the only time I did it-"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Wait, you've done it before? Then what are you waiting for?"\_\*\*

\_"Wellâ€|"\_ I thought about last time. I'd been panicking so much that I had instinctivelyâ€|

I opened my mouth. I'd always felt a sort of heat from a section around his chestâ€|could that be where the fire came from? I clenched my stomach and imagined the heat being forced higher, up my shoulders, to my neck, into my throatâ€|

Wheeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee

\_"That looks so cool, you can actually see your mouth lighting up purpleâ€|"\_

eeeeeeeeeeeEEE \*\*BOOM \*\*

\*\*\_"What happened?" \_\*\*He sat up dazedly.

\*\*\_"I thinkâ€|I did a plasma blast,"\_\*\*I said. I stood upâ€|and looked at the smoking crater I'd made. \*\*\_"Oh, Thor, our moms are going to kill us."\_\*\*

Firewing looked up at him. \*\*\_"We didn't see anything, right?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Right,"\_\*\* I agreed. We slunk back to the eating place. As I walked, it seemed like everyone was looking at us. I nudged Firewing. \*\*\_"Try not to look guilty like that," \_\*\*I hissed.

\_"\*\*"Guilty? You don't look very innocent either,"\*\* \_he whispered back. My mom looked up as we came over.

Instantly she said, \*\*\_"What did you do?"\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Oh no! She knows!" \_\*\*Firewing whispered frantically. \*\*\_"Ignis told me that mothers always know when you've done something!"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Uhâ€|whatâ€|are you talkingâ€|about?" \_\*\*I said nervously.

\_"\*\*"Weâ€|don't know what you'reâ€|you knowâ€|talking about!"\*\* \_Firewing added.

She flicked her ear. \*\*\_"Have you two been trying to breathe fire?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Not just trying, we actually did! NÃ³tt did a-" \_\*\*I covered his mouth with my wing.

She looked at me. \*\*\_"What did you do?"\_\*\* I shrunk under her gaze.

\_"\*\*A plasma blastâ€|" \_\*\* This got her attention.

\*\*\_"A plasma blast?"\_\*\* I shifted my wings.\*\* \_"I didn't think it would actuallyâ€|you knowâ€|"\_ \*\*

She stared at me. \*\*\_"You. Did a plasma blast?"\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Yes. You can go see the crater if you want," \_\*\*I said, a little defensively.

\*\*\_"And you made a crater?" \_\*\*

I didn't see what she was so surprised about.\_\*\*"Yes, a crater."\*\*\_ She just stared at me for a couple seconds.

Suddenly, a blue-eyed Night Fury approached my mom. \*\*\_"It's happening."\_ \*\*

She got to her paws and started walking over to the place where my parents nest was. \*\*\_"Come on,"\_\*\* She said briskly. \*\*\_"This involves you."\_\*\* As we all padded along, Firewing and I tentatively discussed what our punishments would be.

\_\*\*"Grounded to the nest."\*\* \_Firewing predicted glumly.

\*\*\_"Babysitting the others when they hatch."\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Nothing but cod for a day."\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"I like cod."\_ \*\*

Firewing turned to stare at me.

\*\*\_"Really? Then you can eat my cod when I get nothing but cod."\_\*\*

They were silent for a couple of moments, by which time they had reached my family's nest. It was only then that we noticed what was happening. There were a great number of Night Furies clustered around the nest, all stretching over each other in an effort to see what was happening. I bounded over, and wiggled through the dark wall of Night Furies. What I found in the center made me gasp.

The eggs, which in the morning had been a slightly see-through dark gray, were now completely translucent, completely clear, with small jet-black dragon bodies curled up inside. A Night Fury I didn't know stepped forward toward the pile of eggs. He raised his head and roared up to the sky. The eggs were now so fragile that the noise was enough to shatter their glassy shells. Now awake and out of their eggs, the baby Night Furies picked their way out of the eggshells. My mother jumped over to a pair of babies who both had green eyes like mine. She picked them up, purring, and carried them to our nest. My father came over, holding a couple of salmon and dropped them next to the babies. They set upon the fish quickly, and soon they were gone. My mother licked them all over until they wriggled away with discomfort. My father nodded. \*\*\_"Come on, Jet. It's time for the naming ceremony."\_ \*\*

I followed them to the ledge where I'd been named. Again, most of the Night Furies were grouped there. My father climbed onto the ledge.



\_\*\*"Welcome, fellow Night\*\* \*\*Furies. We gather todayâ€¦|\_\*\*\_ Meh, just as boring as the last one. My attention wandered. I wondered when I'd learn to fly- I was nearly a month old and I thought that was old enough. I imagined flying around the island, skimming the water with my claws. Aah, the wind on my scales-

\*\*\_"\_\_NÃ³tt!" \_\*\*A voice hissed next to my ear. I startled awake to find that the space was empty. Had I really been daydreaming that long? I turned around to see my mother, accompanied by Moon and Firewing. \_\*\*"NÃ³tt, could you show us the way to the crater?"\*\* \_my mother asked. I gulped; this was where we were going to be punished. \_Better prepare for a lot of codâ€¦|\_ We'd done it in a small nook by the south side of the bay. I found it easily, even at night.

\*\*\_"Here it is."\_\*\* My mother bent down to examine the seared earth.

Moon gasped. \_\*\*"This is almost as big as anything you've ever made," \_\*\*she murmured. My mother looked worried.

\*\*\_"What does this mean, Moon?"\_ \*\*

Moon was studying the crater with an intense expression on her face. \_"It may be that he has a bigger destiny than what we had supposed," \_she said quietly. She looked up at the moon and back down at the crater.

She took a deep breath. \_\*\*"THE ONE WITH THE POWER TO BECOME THE ALPHA APPROACHESâ€¦|\_\*\* \_she said raspily. I pressed against my mother.

\*\*\_"What's she doing?" \_\*\*She shushed me.

Moon continued: \_\*\*"THE ONE WITH THE POWER TO BECOME THE ALPHA APPROACHESâ€¦| BORN TO THE SUN AND MOON, BORN IN THE NEST OF THE RED DEATHâ€¦| AND THE RED DEATH WILL MARK HIM AS THE ONE, WITH POWER ALL OTHER DRAGONS KNOW NOTâ€¦|AND HE SHALL USE THIS POWER TO BECOME THE ALPHAâ€¦|THE ONE WITH THE POWER TO BECOME THE ALPHA WILL BE BORN IN THE NEST OF THE RED DEATHâ€¦|\_\*\*\_\*\*\_" \_\*\* She shook herself and went quiet. My mother stared at Moon, an almost horrified expression on her face.

\*\*\_"Come on, \_\*\*\_\*\*NÃ³tt,"\*\* \_she said hurriedly. She rushed back to our nest, and I ran after her.

\*\*\_"What did that mean?" \_\*\*I asked her. \_\*\*\_"Was that a proph-"\_\*\* She shushed me.

\*\*\_"The Red Death may not be here, but you never know who else might be listening."\_\*\* Before I could ask her what she meant, she disappeared into the darkness.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: Just in case you were wondering, the 'wheeeeEE" thing represents the ballistic missile noise Toothless makes when he's about to fire. Oh, and please no flames over the fact that the prophecy is structured very similarly to the Harry Potter prophecy.\*\*

### 3. Chapter 3

#### Chapter 3

\*\*A/N: Sorry about such a long delay for this chapter, school started and I was superbusy. But we're back on track now...(hopefully)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Over the next few weeks, my mother seemed tense. One night, I tried to ask her again about what Moon had said.<p>

\*\*\_"I can't tell you here," \_\*\*she said anxiously. \*\*\_"Please, don't say anything about this, to anyone."\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Okay, but-" \_\*\*She hurried away before I could finish. I watched her go, wondering what all of this meant.

My two siblings, Onyx and Eclipse, were growing fast. Soon they would be as big as me, even though I was a month older.

\_\*\*"How come I don't get a cool name like Onyx?"\*\* \_I'd asked my mother.

She paused in licking Eclipse. \*\*\_"Nã³tt is a good name," \_\*\*she said. \*\*\_"She was the grandmother of Thor."\_ \*\*

I flattened my ears. \*\*\_"Yes, grand MOTHER. As in, she was a girl. And I'm a boy."\_\*\*

I paused. \*\*\_"Can't you just rename me? Ink sounds cool."\_ \*\*

She looked almost scandalized. \*\*\_"You can't just-" \_\*\*Suddenly she focused on a point just to my left. \*\*\_"Oh, Moon! What are you doing here?"\_ \*\*

Moon looked serious. \*\*\_"We need to talk, Jet."\_\*\* My mother stood. \*\*\_"About theâ€|?"\_ \*\*

\_"Yes."\_ They both started walking away toward the caves. Immediately, I stood and started to follow them.

\_"Hey, where are you going?" \_Eclipse asked as I ran by. I didn't answer.

I followed them to a small cave near the edge of the island. Hiding inside a small crevice in the rock outside, I settled down to listen.

\*\*\_"It's clearly him. It has to be him. How would this happen otherwise?" \_\*\*my mother said tensely.

\_\*\*"Not necessarily,"\*\* \_Moon offered calmly. \*\*\_"Ignis was born in the nest of the Red Death too. The prophecy could mean him."\_ \*\*

My mother turned around. \*\*\_"How likely is that, Moon? Nã³tt made a six-foot crater, and at the age of a month and a half, no less. Ignis isn't special at all."\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Not in his parents' eyes he isn't," \_\*\*Moon snorted. \*\*\_"His parents think he's the strongest dragon to ever set foot here."\_

\*\*\_"What are you saying, Moon?"\_\*\*

Moon sighed. \*\*\_"I mean, if Ignis finds out about the prophecy, his parents are going to think it's him. And then you know how unpredictable Monstrous Nightmares are."\_ \*\*Suddenly, there was a roar from the other side of the island.

Jet looked up. \_\*\*"Dinner. They'll be expecting me."\*\* \_She jumped out of the cave and back to our nest. Moon was silent for a few seconds.

Then she said, \*\*\_"Nã³tt, I know you're here. Were you listening?"\_\*\* I crept out of the crevice.

\*\*\_"Yesâ€|"\_ \*\*

She flicked her ear. \*\*\_"Good. Jet doesn't want to tell you these things, but I think you should know at least a bit."\_\*\*She turned to go.

\_\*\*"Wait!"\*\* \_I said. \*\*\_"Ignis was born in the nest of the Red Death?"\_ \*\*

She nodded. \*\*\_"His father was carrying him to Hatchling Island, but he was careless and dropped the egg. It cracked, and Ignis hatched there."\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Does that mean he's the dragon in the prophecy?"\_\*\*I asked.

She stopped. \*\*\_"Maybe," \_\*\*she said tersely. She left the cave.

I watched her go, still thinking about what she'd said. When I at last went back to the nest, my mother had just finished throwing up some trout for Eclipse and Onyx. Eclipse sat up straight when she saw me.

\*\*\_"Where have you been? We had to eat all the cod you usually eat!"\_

\*\*\_"Oh, just had to go." \_\*\*I muttered in what I hoped was an offhand tone of voice.

My mother looked at me suspiciously, but the others seemed to accept that as I settled down. We talked for a bit, with Onyx talking excitedly about how he'd tackled Eclipse while Eclipse told loudly about how she'd pinned down Onyx. Their endless chatter sent both my mother and father to sleep early. As I kept the two company, I managed to keep the prophecy out of my thoughts.

Sleep, however, was another story.

Smoky craters full of Gronckle lava surrounded me. My mother stood at the edge, watching the moon, which grew and grew until it morphed into Moon.

\*\*\_The Alpha approachesâ€|"\_\*\* She laughed harshly and turned into a gigantic Ignis, who pounced on top of me, pinning me to the rock.

\*\*\_"Where's your prophecy now?" \_\*\*he mocked as his parents appeared by his side. \*\*\_"You will never become the Alphaâ€|"\_\*\* I startled awake, jumping to my feet.

Eclipse lifted her head sleepily. \*\*\_"What?"\_\*\* I shook my head. \_\*\*"Nothing,"\*\* \_I said as I settled down nervously. I'd never had a dream so vivid before. I had just started to curl up again, when I heard a noise outside. I got up and poked my head outside the cave. It was Ignis, he was climbing back into his cave.

I frowned, wondering why he would be out so lateâ€|

When I woke up, I had an uneasy feeling that I had forgotten something. Maybe involving another dragon? I shook it off. Whatever it was couldn't be that important. I joined my family at breakfast.

Eclipse, always the more excitable one, gave out a squeal. \*\*\_"NÃ³tt! Can you teach us how to fish today? Please? Pretty please? With a salmon on top?"\_ \*\*

I put out my tail and ruffled her ear flaps with it.\*\*\_"Of course."\_\*\*

She immediately boasted, \*\*\_"I'm going to catch a salmon!"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"No you're not!"\_\*\* Onyx snorted,\*\* \_"You'll be lucky if you catch cod!"\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"No, you'll be the one catching cod! And if you do, you have to eat it!"\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Deal!"\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Deal!"\_\*\* Eclipse hurried away, her tail flapping in the wind.

\_It's strange how we're in the same litter, and yet they seem so much littler. \_I roused myself and bounded over to the water's edge to seeâ€|two small Night Furies staring resolutely at the water.

\*\*\_"Do you think we're doing this wrong?"\_\*\* came Eclipse's whisper. \*\*\_"We haven't caught, or even seen, any fish."\_\*\* Then came Onyx's harsher tones.

\*\*\_"No way. I mean, what else can we do? Besides, this makes sense. We wait until we see fish, then we pounce!"\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"Are you sure? Maybe we should go to other side of the bay. Or maybe-"\_ \*\*

\*\*\_"You should stop talking," \_I said behind them. \_"That's what's scaring all the fish away. And don't lean forward too much. If the fish see your shadow on the surface of the water, they'll swim away."\_ \*\*

\_ "Oh," \_Eclipse said. I sat there quietly as the two of them sat at the beach, staring silently at the water. Then, a wiggling little gray line swam up from the deep. Onyx spotted it first. He dived sloppily into the water, with his tail waving above the water as he thrashed around underwater, and finally came up for air, only to be thrown backwards by Eclipse's splash, when she jumped into the water as an effort catch the little gray line that had wiggled away from Onyx's grasp. There was a lot of splashing and thrashing and wiggling and wriggling, but eventually Eclipse collapsed onto the beach and spat out the little gray worm.

I just stared.

\*\*\_ "I have never seen such a dramatic example of fishing. Seriously, I think that dragons would pay to watch you do that."\_ \*\*

They both glared back at me. \*\*\_ "Yeah, but I caught a fish," \_\*\*Eclipse said. I turned over the slimy gray shape with my paw.

\*\*\_ "That's a worm."\_\*\*

Onyx sniffed at it uncertainly. \*\*\_ "Is not."\_\*\*

I snorted. \_\*\*"You think? And by the way, to catch the really good stuff, you're going to have to dive down there instead of waiting for it to come up. Hold your breath."\*\* \_I left them there as they stared at the water with wide eyes and walked over to Firewing by the edge of the bay.

\*\*\_ "Have they caught anything yet?" \_\*\*he greeted me.

\_\*\*"Just a worm. They probably won't think of using it as bait,"\*\* \_I replied.

Firewing gave a wheezy sort of chuckle. \*\*\_ "Probably not."\_\*\*

\*\*\_ "Soâ€¦what do you want to do?" \_\*\*I asked.

\*\*\_ "Wellâ€¦" \_\*\* He said thoughtfully, \*\*\_ " We could alway-"\_\*\*

Eclipse bounded over and aggressively brandished a yellow fish.

She crowed, \*\*\_ "I caught the biggest fish in the world!"\_ \*\*

She leaped up and shot a couple of sparks, coupled with a lone burst of white fire, into the evening sky. I looked closely at the fish and sniffed.

\*\*\_ "That's a minnow."\_\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: Couldn't resist putting \*\*\*\*that in! I know that's just leaving you guys hanging, so I'll try to get the next chapter out as soon as possible.\*\*

## 4. Chapter 4

### Chapter Four

**\*\*A/N:** So many notes before and after the story! Probably annoying, right?**\*\***

**\*\*Second,** to Wild Kratts 349, can you please explain what your comment means? It seems to be in another language that I don't recognize, or maybe some sort of code. I can't identify it, and who are, um...Martin, Zimmy, Chris, Aviva, Kockie, Dragonul, 'Animal pod', Dupa, and Echita?**\*\***

**\*\*Third,** there's some stuff I need to explain that will come in handy in some upcoming chapters. For those of you who haven't seen HTTYD 2, the Alpha is like the Red Death, except he's a Bewilderbeast and so controls all dragons, which leads to Toothlessâ€|**\*\***

**\*\*Oops,** nearly spoiled it! Nope, I'm not telling you anything.**\*\***

**\*\*So,** basically, there is the one true Alpha, who has complete control over all dragons, and there are other, lesser Alphas, one in each nest (since I'm assuming there are other nests out there) as a sort of ruler, which have some amount of control over dragons in the nest, but nothing approaching the true Alpha's power. The Red Death is the Alpha of the nest, but in the second movie it is revealed that the True Alpha (I'm going to capitalize the t to make things simpler) is the Bewilderbeast in Valka's sanctuary for dragons. The Red Death, of course, isn't very smart and stupidly assumes that he is the True Alpha. **\*\*\*\*** However, concerning the whole True Alpha thing, there is always a prophecy made by some wise dragon, which tells who will become the True Alpha. **\*\***

**\*\*** And for the people who have seen HTTYD 2, I just want to say that the True Alpha-ship is NOT always passed on by a dragon defeating the True Alpha. Usually it happens in other, gentler ways.**\*\***

**\*\*And** lastly, I seriously have to apologize for this chapter taking so long.**\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I walked toward the cliff and took a deep breath.<br>Jet came up beside me. \_\*\*"Remember, the winds are stronger up high, and avoid jet streams."\*\*\_  
>It was time to fly back to the nest. Once we got there, we wouldn't be hatchlings anymore. Ignis shouldered his way to the front.<p>

\_\*\*"Well, I don't know about you,"\*\* \_He said in a bored tone,  
\*\*\_"But let's get going! Unless,"\_\*\* He said haughtily,\*\*\_"you're scared?"\_\*\*

\_\*\*"Never!"\*\*\_ I cried. But as I leaped into the air and my wings started to flap to hold me aloft, I frowned.

\_What was Ignis's problem?\_  
>Starting about a week ago, he had suddenly become very competitive,

always trying to point out how much larger the fish he caught were in comparison to everyone else's, walking around engulfed in flames to show off, leaping into the air first just to prove he could fly.<p>

I shook it off. I'd deal with him again later, I was starting to get that exhilarated rush that I always got from flying. I could feel the salty breeze flowing smoothly under my wings and still hear the playful screeching of hatchlings far down below.  
>This was amazing.<br>I swooped down, down to ocean, until I could feel the ocean spray. I glided for a few moments, then flew back up to Ignis.

\_"\*\*"This is so cool! Come on, let's get going!"\*\*\_ I shouted joyfully at the rest of the hatchlings who were clustered at the cliff edge, \*\*\_"Come on!"\_\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>We were gliding over open sea, as we had been for at least hours.<br>Eclipse swooped down beside me. \_\*\*"Oh! I think I can see the nest!"\*\*\_ she said excitedly.

I looked at the horizon. \*\*\_"That's just a Viking ship."\_\*\*

Immediately Jet looked up. \_\*\*"A Viking ship?"\*\*\_ She started flying upwards. \*\*\_"Get above the clouds. We can't let them see us."\_\*\*She called.

I broke through the cloud layer. It was nothing but fluffy white for miles. \_\*\*"Wow..."\*\*\_I said.

Ignis didn't share the opinion. \_\*\*"This is stupid."\*\*\_ he grumbled. \*\*\_"Why are we hiding up here? They're just Vikings, we can take them."\_\*\*And with that, he dived back through the clouds.

I gasped and dived after him. We were technically still hatchlings!

Ignis prepared to fire. \_\*\*"Ignis,\*\*\_\*\*\_ don't!"\*\*\_ He ignored me and fired at the ship's sail. He missed and hit the mast.

Gruff Viking voices erupted from below. "Dragon! Fire the cannons!"

An iron cannonball erupted in a cloud of gray smoke toward Ignis. He was preparing for another blast. \*\*\_"Ignis, get out of the way!"\_\*\*

He'd just opened his mouth like he was going to fire at it when I barreled into him, pushing him away from the cannonball and back into the clouds.

Jet swooped in front of him. \*\*\_"What in the name of Thor were you THINKING?!"\_\*\*she raged. \_\*\*"You're still hatchlings!"\*\*\_

Ignis lifted his head. \*\*\_"I wasn't in any danger,"\_\*\*he said. \*\*\_"I could have taken that whole ship down!"\_\*\*

She looked furious. \_\*\*"Maybe so, but you're not going to. Not on my watch."\*\*\_She threw him a dirty look and went to join Onyx and Eclipse. I started to follow, but Ignis stopped me.

He looked angry. \*\*\_"Why did you have to plow into me like that?"\*\*\_

I made a \_duh \_face. \*\*\_"That cannonball was about to hit you, and you didn't seem at all inclined to get out of the way!"\_ \*\* I started to leave again, but he flew in front of me.

\*\*\_"I was going to take care of it! I practically destroyed that mast in one shot, I could handle a little thing like that!"\_\*\*

I ground my teeth. \*\*\_"You didn't practically destroy that mast, you just scorched it. And cannonballs are made of metal- it would still hit you, it would just be molten."\_ \*\*I paused. \_\*\*"Why does it matter to you anyway? There'll be plenty of ships to raid when we're older."\*\*\_

He just looked at me malevolently and flew away to join his family.

I rolled my eyes and kept flying.

Eclipse bounced in the air...somehow. \*\*\_"Oh, there it is!"\_ \*\* she exclaimed. \*\*\_"no really, it's not a ship- there it is!"\_\*\*

The dark island rose out of the mist and we all headed toward it. Looking at it closely, I shivered quietly. Even though I had hatched there, compared to bright, cheery, rainbow-y Hatchling Island, it seemed so...forbidding. The entrance, a deep black hole in one side, only added to the overall sense of unfriendliness.

Jet looked over her shoulder and called to us. \_\*\*"I want you to do exactly what I do. It's dangerous flying into the nest until you've learned the way, and we lose a couple of hatchlings each year."\*\*\_She paused. \_\*\*"I want all of you to slowly descend until you're gliding in front of the entrance. Then, flap hard until you're in the tunnel and then just glide without moving your wings. Remember, don't try to flap, because even though your wingspans now can flap without hitting anything, it won't when you're an adult and then you'll need to know this."\*\*\_

I angled my wings until I was flying beside Firewing. \*\*\_"Do you think it's true, that they lose a couple of hatchlings each year?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Can't be,"\_ \*\*He answered, albeit uncertainly,\_ \*\*"All the adults are watching us."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"But we \*\*\_\*\*are\*\*\_\*\* going to be flying in a dark tunnel...and there \*\*\_\*\*are\*\*\_\*\* a lot of us..."\*\*\_

We flew on in silence, and when we entered the tunnel and no immediate disaster struck, I started to relax. Until, another adult dragon suddenly called out,

\_\*\*"Turn right! Now!"\*\*\_Then, after a couple seconds,\_\*\*"Turn left! Go Down!"\*\*\_



\_Yikes. They meant it when they talked about having to 'memorize the way'!\_

Then suddenly, the sheer drop leveled out and we all burst into a huge cavern that had enormous spires of rock sticking out the sides, hanging freely over a pit filled with dull orange...clouds? Being born here hadn't made it any less amazing.

The adults all started swerving toward a piece of rock to our right, and for the first time I noticed the huge gathering of adult dragons on it. We dropped down toward it, and I winced as my paws hit the pebbly rock.

Then, another Night Fury dropped down in front of me, with her tail whisking only a paw-length from my face. She turned around to look at it with deeply sapphire eyes as it settled near her front paws.

I edged nearer to Firewing.

\_\*\*"Who's that?"\*\*\_

He followed my gaze to the dragon in front of me and looked back and forth between us and frowned. Then Firewing turned back to me and said,

\_\*\*"Don't you dare."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"What?"\*\*\_

Noses started to nudge me along from behind. I obliged, and started walking forward.

\_\*\*"Look, I've heard of Ebony, and if there is one she-dragon on this island you shouldn't tangle with, it's her."\*\*\_

I shuffled along, not noticing that I was now in front of a rather gruff-looking large Night Fury, and Firewing in front of a fierce Gronckle.

\_\*\*"Really? She looks nice enough."\*\*\_

He shook his head.\_\*\* "If there's one thing she's not, it's nice."\*\*\_

\_\*\* "Since when do you listen to rumors?"\*\*\_

\_\*\*"It's not rumor, it's true! This Zippleback told me about how one time she-"\*\*\_

Someone coughed loudly. \*\*\_"If the hatchlings are now ready, we can begin the ceremony..."\*\*\_

I turned away from Firewing to see all the adult dragons grouped around us. \_What ceremony is this, now?\_

\*\*\_"It is time for our hatchlings to become apprentices and receive their mentors,"\*\*\_ Jet continued. \*\*\_N\_\_Ã³tt!"\*\*\_she called.

\*\*\_"Your new mentor will be Shade!"\*\*\_

A big Night Fury stepped forward and bowed his head for a second. Then he held out his tail expectantly.

I looked at it. What was I supposed to do?

A dragon nudged me. I turned to see Ebony. \*\*\_"Wrap your tail around his,"\_ \*\*she hissed.

Awkwardly, I obliged. My tail was so small I could just barely go all the way around his. There was a second's pause and Shade pulled his tail out of mine. I shifted uncomfortably.

Jet continued to give all of the other Night Fury hatchlings mentors. Then she stepped down and a Gronckle took her place. \*\*\_"Firewing! Your mentor will be Firefly."\_\*\*

A Gronckle stepped forward toward Firewing. Gronckles don't really have long tails, so instead they touched foreheads.

After Firewing's ceremony my attention started to wane immediately. Before I knew it, it was already over.

Jet came over and huffed angrily. \*\*\_"Why do you have to goof off in all the ceremonies?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Well,"\_ \*\*I huffed back, "It's\*\*\_ not like anyone actually said there would be a ceremony at the end of the flight."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Hmmf. Anyway, I'll have you know that Shade will teach you pretty much everything you need to know: Deep-sea fishing, hunting on land, special types of fire, how to dive-bomb...and, of course, sheep gripping."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Sheep gripping?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Yes, the art of gripping sheep. Many different techniques, but nonetheless essential."\_\*\*

\_Essential? Great.\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: I'm sorry this took such a long time! I usually write on Microsoft Word and copy and paste into FanFiction when I'm done, but for some reason when I did that this time it went crazy and pasted a bunch of gibberish so I had to copy it out by hand.\*\*

\*\*And of course the whole apprentice/mentor thing is based on Warriors. Please review.\*\*

## 5. Chapter 5

\*\*A/N: Just as a heads-up, there's going to be a lot of time jumps up ahead, because I seriously want to get to the 'Hiccup bonding with Toothless' scenes, and you probably want to get to those too.\*\*

\*\*Also there's this kind of system. Apprentices and smaller dragons, like Terrible Terrors, go out every day to fish and hunt in order to

feed most of the nest. Most adult dragons, on the other hand, focus on keeping watch for Viking ships (since Stoick was so determined to find the nest) and flying out most night to raid Berk in order to feed the Red Death.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><em><strong>"Do it again."<strong>\_

I flexed my claws sorely. I had been trying, and failing, to successfully carry a sheep over a stretch of ocean for all of today.

Correction: all of the last four days. Who knew sheep gripping was so hard?

\_\*\*"Your problem is that you keep gripping by the top of the wool, which won't last a mile. What you need to do is grip hard around the middle-"\*\*\_

I grabbed the fake sheep, which was a bunch of messy clumps of wool stuck to a ball of brambles.

\_\*\*"-And keep a good grip on it so that it doesn't fall out-"\*\*\_

The fake sheep started to slip. I squeezed harder.

\_\*\*"-always being careful, of course-"\*\*\_

It was still slipping. I squeezed harderâ€|harderâ€|untilâ€|

The fake sheep head flew away from the body and bounced around until coming to a rest next to Shade's tail.

\_\*\*"-to make sure not to harm the sheep,"\*\*\_ he deadpanned.

I blushed beneath my scales and tucked my tail around my paws.

He sighed. \*\*\_"I know that Night Fury claws aren't made for holding sheep, but-"\*\*

\_\*\*"But then why do we hunt them?"\*\*\_ I blurted.

He looked at me scornfully. \*\*\_"Because the Alpha likes sheep, that's why."\*\*

I started to open my mouth, but he shushed me. \*\*\_"Maybe we need to practice with a real sheep?"\*\*\_ he asked, looking at the fake sheep head. He flew away, probably to go fetch a sheep. I wondered where he'd find one. I mean, it wasn't like he could stage a one-dragon assault on Berk.

Wait, could he?

\_\*\*"Hey, NÃ³tt!"\*\*\_ I turned around. It was Firewing.

\_\*\*"How's sheep gripping?"\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Stupid,"\*\*\_ I said, \_\*\*"I mean, Shade actually said that Night Furies' claws had evolved to specifically hold fish. But he's still

making me learn about sheep instead!"\*\*\_

Firewing nodded sympathetically.

\_"\*\*"I know- Firefly keeps having me practice diving for fish."\*\*\_

I grinned. \_\*\*"Diving's easy!"\*\*\_

\_"\*\*"No it's not, us Gronckles aren't all sleek and aerodynamic like you!"\*\*\_ he argued.

\_"\*\*"Who's this?"\*\*\_ I nearly groaned; Shade was back with his sheep.

Wait, how did he find a sheep that quickly? Maybe he \_could\_ stage a one dragon-

\_"\*\*"Well?"\*\*\_

\_"\*\*"This is Firewing, my friend,"\*\*\_ I said.

Shade put a paw on the sheep, which was trying to escape.

\_"\*\*"\_Shouldn't your friend be with his mentor?"\*\*\_

\_"\*\*"Yes, sir,"\*\*\_ Firewing said quickly. He glanced at me and hurried away; Shade was pretty intimidating. Shade's eyes followed him until he disappeared behind some rocks.

He fixed his gaze on me. \_\*\*"You're friends with a Gronckle?"\*\*\_

I shifted. \_\*\*"Yes,"\*\*\_ I said defiantly.

Shade pulled the sheep back by its tail just as it neared freedom in the form of a forest.

He snorted. \_\*\*"A Gronckle, of all dragonsâ€¦!"\*\*\_

He plopped the sheep in front of me, which had conveniently passed out from shock. I wondered what he meant.

\* \* \*

><p><strong><em>"You're on food duty."<em>\*\*

I jerked my head up from my nest, which I was re-charring.

\_"\*\*"What?"\*\*\_

Jet sighed. \_\*\*"Food duty. You know, where you go out every day to get food for the nest?"\*\*\_

Oh, that food duty. I'd seen more senior apprentices fly out of the nest and come back later with fish or weirdly furry land animals, but I'd never really given that much thought to it.

\*\*\_"OK,"\_\*\*I said absently as I scorched the ground into clearly defined marks. \*\*\_"Onyx and Eclipse too?"\*\*\_

\*\*\_"No, they're going on a raid tomorrow night to provide a bit of

cover fire against the catapults. They keep building more all the time."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"WHAT?!"\_\*\*

She looked at me. \*\*\_"Well, of course they're building more catapults, winter's not far off and they want to defend their livestock, don't they?"\_\*\*

I jumped up. \_\*\*"Onyx and Eclipse are going on a raid?!"\*\*\_

She nodded. \*\*\_"Yes, it'll be good to see how they perform under pressure. I hope Onyx's aim has improved since-"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Why aren't I going?"\_\*\*I cried. \*\*\_"I've been an apprentice for three weeks now!"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Which is still a short amount of time!"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"So why aren't Onyx and Eclipse on food duty too?"\_\*\*

Jet had stood up. She flicked her tail and settled back down in her nest. \*\*\_"Because they aren't good fishers, so they'd be much more useful on a raid. Whereas you are a good fisher, so-"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"I'd be useful on a raid!"\_\*\*I burst out furiously.

She looked at me sarcastically. \*\*\_"Is that so."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Yes!"\_\*\*I crowed triumphantly. \*\*\_"Remember on Hatchling Island, when I made that cra-"\_\*\*

She was up in a flash, covering my mouth with her tail. \*\*\_"I told you not to mention that!"\_\*\*

I blinked uncertainly; was it really that important? She sighed and took her tail away. She looked up through a small hole in the cave ceiling at the moon. \*\*\_"You should be getting to bed."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"But-"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Just go to bed,"\_\*\*she said tiredly. I blinked again and curled up in my nest, still warm from the charring. I started to close my eyes, but not before I saw Jet slip out the door.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Jet's POV <strong>

I scuffed my paws on the ground. \*\*\_"I told N\*\*\_Ã³tt about the raid."\_\*\*\_\*\*

Moon chuckled slightly. \*\*\_"I'm guessing he didn't like it?"\_\*\*

We were on the gravel beach just outside of the entrance cave.

I tipped my head. \*\*\_"Of course not, not at his age. But we can't let him go on any raids until he knows the risk."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Mmm," \_\*\*Moon agreed.

I closed my eyes. \_\*\*"If he goes on a raid, his abilities will start to attract attention. Maybe even the Red Death's. We can't afford that."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Does Shade know?"\*\* \_she asked.

I nodded. \*\*\_"I've told him what's at stake. He won't tell anyone."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"So everyone knows except for \*\*\_N\*\*\_Ã³tt,"\_\*\*\_\*\*\_\*\* Moon said softly.

I opened my eyes and looked at her sharply. \*\*\_"That's not how it is!"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Then how is it?"\_\*\*she asked.

I stared up at the stars. \*\*\_"The prophecy was made when he was just a hatchling, he likely doesn't know what it means. We can't know how he might react to the truth. We need to wait a little longer."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Yes, but the longer you wait, the more likely someone else will find out. And then it'll be dangerous for him to not know."\_\*\*

I just sighed and didn't answer. Even when Moon left to go back to the nest, I just stayed there, thinking and watching the stars.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Toothless's POV<strong>

The next morning, I got up, but I didn't go over to Shade or start fishing like I was supposed to. I just sat resolutely on the edge of the beach, staring at the ocean. If they weren't going to let me go on raids, then I wasn't going to train. Then I thought I heard Firewing's voice. My ears pricked.

\*\*\_"Yeah, isn't it a shame that\_ \_NOTT is nowhere to be found. I mean, you were going to TEACH HIM TO HUNT LAND ANIMALS, weren't you,\_ \_Shade?"\_\*\*\_

><em>

>I rolled my eyes. This was just painfully obvious.<p>

Wait, teach me to hunt land animals? Like on islands? Near Berk?

\_\*\*"Er, yes. We were going to Squirr-"\*\*\_

There was a thud like someone had slapped someone else with their tail.

\_\*\*"Ow!"\*\*\_

Then I heard Firewing hiss very clearly, \*\*\_"No, you have to make sure he can hear you."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Oh," \_\*\*Shade said. He cleared his throat. \*\*\_"YES, WE WERE GOING

TO SQUIRREL ISLAND TO TEACH NOTT TO HUNT LAND ANIMALS!"\_ \*\*he practically shouted. All the birds in the forest flew away.

I jumped on top of a couple of rocks and made my way over to the place where Firewing and Shade were talking. They were both facing the beach, trying to project their voices . I slowly crept down until I was right behind them. They were so focused on trying to talk loudly about squirrel catching that they didn't even notice until...

\*\*\_"Hi."\_\*\*

They both jumped at the exact same time and whirled around. I just sat there calmly.

\*\*\_"You know, I could hear everything you were saying. And besides, it was pretty obvious."\_\*\*

They both looked at me in a sheepish sort of way.

\*\*\_"Well, we thought you were pretty far down on the beach,"  
\_\*\*Firewing said defensively.

I snorted. \*\*\_"Yeah, whatever. But what \_about\_ going to Squirrel Island to hunt land animals?"\_\*\*

Shade's tail twitched in an uncomfortable sort of way.

\*\*\_"Well, really, I was going to do it in about a week or so..."\_\*\*

I raised an eyebrow.

\_\*\*"...and you probably couldn't carry a goat..."\*\* \_he continued.

I gasped with mock outrage. \_\*\*"Of course I could!"\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Like you did with that sheep yesterday?"\*\*\_

I winced. Every time I tried to pick it up, it started to slip out of my claws, but when I gripped tighter I could feel my my claws going through the sheep's skin. Even when I tried to hold it with my back paws, the sheep would suffocate. It had died within twenty minutes.

\*\*\_"Are we going or not?"\_ \*\* I demanded.

Shade's ear twitched. \*\*\_"Only if you can carry a sheep for a mile without dropping or hurting it."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Well, you'd better find a sheep\_\_ then..."\_\*\*\_  
><em>

\* \* \*

><p>The sheep fell out of my claws down toward the ocean. I dived after it and caught it just before it hit the water. Shade and I had agreed that it only counted as dropping if the sheep touched the ground- or water, I supposed. <em>Would the other land animals be this hard? <em>I wondered. \_Nah, surely not. \_Like, goats had horns

and stuff. Couldn't I hold them by the horns? Would they break off?\_

><em>

I suddenly realized that I'd been flying for two minutes- and I was still holding the sheep. Looking down, I saw that I was holding the animal with my front legs instead of my claws. Automatically I shifted it toward my paws and the sheep instantly fell. Again, I dived after it. When I was back at normal flying height with the sheep, I realized I was carrying it with my front legs again.

Meh, it worked. When I landed at the island where Shade and Firewing were waiting, Shade immediately rushed over. \_\*\*"What are you doing? You don't hold a sheep like that!"\*\* \_

I shrugged. \_\*\*"I do, and it works for me."\*\* \_I looked at him. \*\*\_"Which means...?"\_\*\*

He scowled. \*\*\_"Yes, I'll show you how to hunt land animals."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Yes!"\_ \*\*Firewing exclaimed. Shade turned around to look at Firewing, who seemed to shrink a little.

\*\*\_"Not \_\*\*\*\*you\_, "\_\*\* he snorted. \*\*\_"Isn't your mentor missing you?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"No," \_\*\*Firewing said brightly. \*\*\_"Firefly excused me for the day since she's going on a raid tonight with Onyx and-"\_\*\*He caught my expression and hastily changed the subject. \*\*\_"But anyway, I don't have anything today."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"I can't teach a Gronck-"\_\*\*Shade started.

\*\*\_"Then I'll just watch!"\_ \*\*Firewing interrupted enthusiastically.

Shade flicked his ear in a \_very\_ unenthusiastic sort of way, but still turned and started walking toward a wide grassy plain to our left.

I ran and caught up with him.

\_\*\*"What are we going to hunt? Squirrels? Sheep? Some other land animal that starts with an S?"\*\*\_

Shade sighed dismissively. \*\*\_"If we could find a herd of wild sheep, we wouldn't have to raid the Vikings, and as for squirrels, they live in dense forests, which no dragon can fly in except for Terrible Terrors, and they aren't exactly known for their hunting skills."\_\*\*

I bounced on the soft, springy grass underneath my paws. It felt awesome. \*\*\_"But then what \_are\_ we hunting?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Cows."\_\*\*

I stopped dead.

\_Cows! But they don't have fur! Or horns! Or anything!\_



\_\*\*"We're hunting\*\*\_\*\* cows?"\_\*\*I said in disbelief. \*\*\_"How about...goats?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"There won't be any goats out and about until next summer. We hunt cows."\_\*\*

He took my silence as agreement. \*\*\_"Okay, there's a wild herd down there,"\_\*\*he said, pointing with one claw. He hovered over the group.

\*\*\_"Watch closely,"\_\*\*he called as he prepared to snatch one. \*\*\_"See you pick it up like this...but they don't have protective fluff like sheep, so you have to...and then you dig into its hooves like that...but the udder is delicate so you'll have to use your claws to do that..."\_\*\*

It was horrifying. I fled for the sake of my poor, poor eyeballs.

Shade laughed as I flew away as fast as I could. \*\*\_"I thought you wanted to hunt land animals!"\_\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: I don't know if there are wild cow herds in Scandinavia. There are in Minecraft, though, so let's just say there are.\*\*

\*\*I bet you're probably waiting for Nott to go on a raid. Don't worry, it's coming up. Eventually.\*\*

\*\*Please review.\*\*

## 6. Chapter 6

\*\*A/N: I noticed that for all of the last few chapters, I've consistently apologized for how long they took. Every time. However, this chapter took even longer than the usual longness, nearly a week longer in fact. Writer's block, a bit, and complications in the writing, where I knew what I wanted to write, but it was so hard to write it for a couple of these scenes near the end. You'll understand when you read it. And I do have to apologize for what happens, but it...well...had to happen.\_\*\*

\*\*But for all the other chapters...I think now that's just the speed I write at. Sorry guys, but you'll have to get used to it.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I dropped my fish onto the makeshift net. Three in one go, cool.<p>

Coal landed next to me. \*\*\_"Hey, maybe we should be going back."\_\*\*

I looked up. \_\*\*"What, already? Isn't it a bit early?"\*\*\_

He laughed. \*\*\_"Yes, but I've got a raid tonight."\_\*\*

I stiffened, then relaxed. Coal kept chattering on.

It had been two months since Onyx and Eclipse had gone on their first raid- and they'd went to plenty others since then. I, on the other hand, was tasked with the noble job of...food duty.

Still.

It was still a quarter to sunset, but Coal and I tied up the net anyway, careful to keep the fish inside. It had been woven out of leaves and vines as a more efficient way of carrying fish. Coal was still talking, one of the biggest chatterboxes I'd seen. The only time he stopped was when we entered the nest, since it was hard to concentrate on finding your way when you were constantly chatting.

We landed on the outcropping that served as the main commons area for the Night Fury section, unfolding the net so the fish spilled out. I turned it upside down and shook to get the rest of them out before stuffing it in the small cave where they were stored.

\*\*\_"Bye," \_\*\*Coal called as he flew up out of the nest, probably to meet with the other raiders before they left for Berk. I watched him go before my gaze shifted downward to see another dragon.

I flew over to Firewing, who was standing near the edge of the Gronckle's shelf. \*\*\_"Hey, are you going somewhere?"\_\*\*

He startled, surprised. \*\*\_"Yes..."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Great!"\_\*\*I said. \*\*\_"Can I come with?"\_\*\*

He shifted. \_\*\*"Um, N\*\*\_Ã³tt...I'm going on the raid."\_\*\*\*\*\_

I just stared at him. \*\*\_"Oh. That's...great,"\_\*\*I said. \*\*\_"Really cool,"\_ \*\*I added when I saw the way he was looking at me.

Firewing looked almost relieved and spread his wings. \*\*\_"I'll see you later tonight,"\_\*\*he said and flew up and away.

I flew back to the Night Fury space and landed near my private nest. I looked up at the exit hole.

\_Coal \_was going on a raid. And he'd only come back from Hatchling Island barely a month ago. I'd been living at the nest for two months longer. And yet he was going, and I was not.

Jet passed by me and snatched up a fish. \*\*\_"Your fishing is getting better and better, \_\*\*N\*\*\_Ã³tt-"\_\*\*\*\*\_\*\*

I turned so quickly she nearly dropped the fish. \*\*\_"Coal's going on a raid?"\_\*\*

She blinked at me calmly. \_\*\*"Yes. So?"\_\*\*\_

Like she didn't know what I was getting at. \*\*\_"How come I'm not?"\_\*\*

She huffed slightly. \*\*\_"Coal is a very qualified and-"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"I'm older! I need to go on a raid!"\_\*\*

Her eyes flashed. \_\*\*"No, you don't."\*\*\_

\_\*\*"But-"\*\* \_I started to say desperately.

\_\*\*"Jet."\*\*

><em>

For the second time in as many minutes, I whipped around. It was...Dad.

For a bit, my father had been out on an exploratory mission looking for new islands, as it was winter here now and all the sheep were locked up tight in the Viking barns. The Alpha required constant feeding, so we had to stage raids nearly every day while alternating between islands. However, Berk was by far the most profitable.

He stepped forward. \*\*\_"Jet, I have to agree with \*\*\_\*\*N\*\*\_Ã³tt on this. You can't keep him inside forever."\_\*\*\*\*\_\*\*\_\*\*

Jet regarded him coldly. \*\*\_"I'll consider it,"\_\*\*she said icily, flashing me a look that said it was still out of the question. Without sparing any time, she immediately took off to join tonight's raid.

Dad watched her ascent. \*\*\_"I guess that's that,"\_\*\*he murmured quietly. \*\*\_"Jet's too stubborn to change her mind, much."\_\*\*He shrugged and started to go to the caves like most of the other dragons, now that the raiders had left.

I started to turn, too, when I heard a dragon land behind me. Upon turning I saw...Ignis. As expected.

\*\*\_"Feeling a little left behind, are you?"\_\*\*he said mockingly, right on cue. \*\*\_"Never been anything but food duty?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"You're one to talk," \_\*\*I snarled. \*\*\_"You're not on the raid either."\_\*\*

He looked smug. \*\*\_"Aren't I?"\_\*\*He spread his wings and soared up and out of the nest. \*\*\_"See you in the morning!"\_\*\*he called down as he disappeared.

For a second I just stared after him. Then I started getting angrier and angrier.

\_Ignis was going on a raid! ! ! ! \_

Before I knew what I was doing, I'd already flown through the hole up into the night. Fueled by fury, I set off toward Berk.

\* \* \*

><p>I landed quietly in the forest.<p>

I was already kind of regretting coming here. But it was too late. When I arrived, it was still too early for anyone to be heading back. But now, tons of dragons flooded the skies to deliver their cargo

back to the nest before returning for more. No chance I could sneak away.

But then what was I going to \_do\_? If I helped in the raid I'd be discovered in seconds. When I left I hadn't thought that I was settling in for a long night of...nothing. I couldn't even sleep, lest some Vikings found me helpless.

I watched the raid. \_That was a good shot, \_I thought idly, watching a Monstrous Nightmare engulf a whole street in flames. Then I realized that it was Ignis, and my attitude switched immediately. \_Eh, he only took out like six houses anyway.\_

As a couple of hours passed, I watched the skies to see if there was any gap where I could fly back. None appeared. At nearly one in the morning, I was still in the forest, pacing and waiting for morning.

\_This was a stupid idea.\_

A loud BOOM rippled through the night. My head snapped up just in time to see a perfectly aimed plasma blast blow through a catapult. Faint purple shockwaves spread outward. I nearly laughed. Nobody fired like my mom!

But another dragon soon caught my attention. Firewing dived into the chaos of the village and resurfaced clutching a sheep. I wanted so badly to fly over and congratulate him.

"\_Augghh!\_"I whipped my gaze over to the right, where a gigantic Viking jumped onto a catapult. I nearly gasped- it was the Viking Chief, with flaming hair just like the others had described. I watched in awe at the legendary human who had outlasted every other chief, escaping death from our attacks for nearly twenty years. They said he could fight a Monstrous Nightmare with his bare hands. Better yet, they said that when a Deadly Nadder tried to attack him as a baby, the Chief popped his head clean off!

I watched avidly while shuffling my paws. I hoped he would do some awesome \_but harmless\_ Viking-y display of strength. I wondered how much he could carry. I mean, Eclipse could carry a rock nearly as big as a sheep but this almost lethal Viking could probably hold a bould-

Instead, he loaded the catapult and aimed it at Firewing.

I gasped, not caring if any dragons heard. I tried to fly, but my wing caught on a branch.

It unfolded almost as if in slow motion.

The cannonball, launching from the catapult. Firewing turning, too late to dodge. And then...

My mother, diving in front of him just as the ball hit.

Time sped back up. My mother screamed and fell, flightless, crashing down to the forest like a bird that had lost its wings.

I raced faster than I had ever gone, skidding in front of her in

seconds. One of her wings was burned. The other one was almost completely torn away.

\_A bird that had lost its wings...\_

I crouched over her. She blinked and coughed painfully.  
\*\*\_"Talk...Moon...prophecy..."\_\*\*she gurgled. Her eyes dulled.

\_No!\_

Grief flooded me, hurting like nothing I'd felt. I shoved it down, like under so many layers of rock, where the heat and pressure transformed it into rage.

The Chief was going to pay!

I launched myself into the sky, streaking by all the other dragons who were fluttering aimlessly in the air like disoriented butterflies, in that shocked state that comes after a tragedy.

I hurtled in the air as high as I could go I hovered there for a couple of seconds while letting out an agonized screech. Then I dived down below the clouds.

The fiery-haired chief was still standing on that wretched catapult.

Alone.

Out in the open.

\_Vulnerable.\_

I plunged downward, the wind screaming as it raked against my scales. I started forcing the fire up into my throat, pushing harder and harder. He was still standing there, utterly exposed.

I angled steeper...pushed harder...streamlined my body more...

wheweee\*\*ee  
EEEEEEEE\_\*\*

The chief looked up in an almost panicky sort of way.

\*\*\_EE\_\*\*

\*\*BOOM\*\*

A harsh blare like a thunderclap erupted as the fireball ripped through the air toward the chief. I regained my wits just in time to see him leap off of the catapult to the ground. Hordes of Vikings instantly came swarming out of their tiny houses toward him. I couldn't get a clear shot, and I was forced to turn back to the nest. But before Berk was out of sight, I swiveled my head around one last time to look at him.

\_He killed my mother. He's going to pay.\_

\* \* \*

><p>Stoick's POV<p>

"Stoick!" Valka rushed out of our house looking terrified. "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine," I said quickly, and she sighed with relief, leaning against the catapult. The Vikings gathered around us. The dragons all seemed to have left after I fired at that Gronckle- although why, I wasn't sure. I'd heard a dragon dying screech, but when I looked back the Gronckle was perfectly fine. Someone else must have shot it down, I supposed.

Then I looked around. Seemingly everyone in the village had come charging over from their battle stations to check that I was fine, which I was. I frowned for a couple of seconds.

The dragon attacks were getting stronger. What if something like that happened every night? I might not be so lucky next time.

Before I could ponder this any longer, Valka hurried over, her face twisting in pain as she gazed at the dead corpses of dragons.

"Stoick...May I speak to you privately?"

I blinked, surprised. "Yes?"

We walked around behind our house. Valka seemed to gather herself.

"Stoick, I know you want to wait to have a child until a safer time. But if we put it off until then, both of us may not still be alive."

"Valka, I-"

"What!" she said. "You were three feet away from death just now. Three feet. And what will happen if you die? The village will be left without an heir. You know what happened the last time that was."

I grimaced; Berk had nearly split into civil war with every man fighting for chiefdom.

She kept pressing. "It could be a decade before things calm down. All manner of things could happen in that time. We need to do it while we still can..."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: So Hiccup's dad killed Toothless's mom.  
Irony!\*\*

\*\*And it's because of Toothless that Hiccup was born at all. More irony!\*\*

\*\*I'm sorry to say that this is the first in a long string of

tragedies. Hope you didn't get attached to anyone. \*\*\*\*Don't say I didn't warn you.\*\*

## 7. Chapter 7

\*\*A/N:\*\*

\*\*Ugh, just when I decide that I'm okay with how slowly I write, I suddenly start writing even SLOWER. And such is my life.\*\*

\*\*To BladeNightFury: I don't know, I guess I didn't think of that. Fifteen years seems like a while. \*\*

\*\*I mean, I was thinking that dragons would age slower than humans did, like cats or dogs or something, but there really isn't much anything more specific than that.\*\*

\*\*And, to unicorns: Um...sorry. You advise me in your comment to not do time jumps and what do I start this chapter with?\*\*

\*\*A time jump.\*\*

\*\*Sorry, but I really didn't want to write a kind of after-death scene where Toothless is grieving. I don't have any experience with that (fortunately).\*\*

\*\*Also, I was thinking that Nott/Toothless would only be around six months old, which seems weird. But there was the month before his siblings hatched, then two more months on Hatchling Island, which would leave three months of living at the Nest. So Nott is still less than a year older than Hiccup.\*\*

\*\*However, that thing about all the Night Furies being killed at once except for Toothless? You might be onto something there...\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Bubbles streamed past my muzzle as I blew through the water, eyes narrowed. My vision rapidly adjusted to the newfound darkness and I snatched a fish by the tail, spreading my wings to slow my descent. The scaly thing struggled, and I shifted my claws to tighten on its gills. Within less than a minute it went unconscious from lack of oxygen and I was already on my way back to the surface.<p>

I broke through the surface and sucked in a gasp of air. I could have stayed down longer, likely, but it was only wise to push it when there wasn't a chance of drowning. Taking a moment to shake off the water, I dropped the fish on the slimy pile. I turned to look at Shade. \*\*\_"Are we done yet?"\_\*\*

He made a show of contemplating the sun carefully, taking a big breath to say...\*\*\_"No."\_\*\*

I started to open my mouth to protest, but he cut me off. \_\*\*"Unless, of course..."\*\* \_he said slyly, \*\*\_"You can catch five in one trip."\_\*\*

Without thinking about it, I filled my lungs and dived again.

A flicker of reflected silver light flashed in the corner of my eyes. I dove and grasped for it, only for the thing to slip out of my claws. Furiously, I whipped around and lunged at another bright flash in the water, barely catching it.

But how was I going to hold it while I caught more? Awkwardly I clutched it as securely as I could with one of my back paws. This was going to fall apart as soon as I reached my third fish. Never mind. I'd fly that mile when I came to it.

Except I didn't have any time to! I'd wasted too much time on the second fish. I beat my wings and surfaced, quickly dumping the fish.

Shade opened his mouth. \_\*\*"Give me another chance!"\*\*\_I interrupted, panting. In a second I'd gone back under.

Over and over again I kept trying at it. I was pretty sure that if I let Shade get a word in, he'd probably say something along the lines of that I couldn't have another try.

\_Yeah, well, I'm doing it anyway! \_I thought as I dived yet again. Quickly enough, I caught three fish. With my lungs starting to ache, I swiped at a fish, which was tricky with just the one paw. As the ache intensified, I spotted a fish through the water and raced toward it. My paws were all stuck with their own fish. Instinctively, I reached out and grabbed it in my mouth.

Instantly, water flooded my mouth. Stupidly, I tried to swallow it, making me gag. I just managed to keep hold of it by the tail when I broke through air.

I spat the fish out and shook the rest onto the now big pile. Coughing, I faced Shade brightly. \*\*\_"So, can I- cough- get the rest of the afternoon- What?"\_\*\*

He gaped at me for a second before turning back to normal. \*\*\_"I would, but it's already sunset. You spent hours doing that."\_\*\*

I turned to see that the sun was already setting. \_I spent hours trying to catch five fish?\_

\_\*\*"-but you ended up doing it anyway, so you can have tomorrow morning off,"\*\* \_Shade continued. He started to tie up the net.

I blinked and started to help him. \_Wow! I actually caught five fish in one go! I gotta go tell Mo-\_

I stopped dead.

Shade finished fastening the net with a flourish. He looked at me. \*\*\_"Something wrong?"\_\*\*

I shook myself. \_You meant to think Dad, \_I corrected myself firmly. \_Dad.\_ \_\*\*"Nope,"\*\* \_I said brightly as I took hold of the net. We took off, carrying it between us. \*\*\_"Nothing at all."\_\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Shade shook himself as we finished stashing the net.



<strong><em>"Well, <em><strong>NÃ³tt, see you tomorrow,"<strong>\_\_\*\*he called with a yawn before flying to his cave.

I glanced around quickly. Careful to be quiet, I crept toward the precipice. If I could just get to my nest...

\_"\*\*"Hey\*\*\_\*\* \_\_\*\*NÃ³tt!"\*\*\_\*\*\*\* someone said loudly. \_Drat.\_

I turned to see Orion, a Night Fury I didn't know very well. \*\*\_"You want to go on tonight's raid?" \_\*\*he said brightly.

I held back a sigh and spread my wings resignedly. \_\*\*"Okay,"\*\* \_I said shortly, and we flew out of the nest together.

Ever since word got around that I'd nearly hit the Viking Chief, everyone had been clamoring for me to be in their raids. I'd gone from one extreme to another-from no raids to nearly every one.

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I thought about the couple of clouds I'd seen floating near the horizon. Maybe it would rain.

Probably not.

I started to feel an uncomfortable prickling on the back of my neck. When I turned around, I saw the very tip of Moon's dark blue tail slink around a corner.

Immediately, a wave of guilt crashed over me.

For practically a month, I had completely ignored what Mom had told me to do with her last dying breaths:

Talk to Moon about the prophecy.

At first, I'd forgotten all about it, and when I remembered, I told myself that I still needed to recover from Mom dying, and I whenever I thought about what Moon might have to tell me I squashed it down because it would always, inevitably, lead to thoughts about Mom and that last cold, dark night.

And besides, I had thought uncomfortably, it couldn't be important. I mean, if it was \_that\_ important, wouldn't she have told him a long time ago?

But weeks had gone by and I was thoroughly out of excuses.

I cautiously rose, telling myself that this would be \_the day\_ I would do \_the thing\_, but before I had gone any more than a tail-length (Zippleback, that is) Ebony cut me off.

Her steely blue eyes locked on my rather less intimidating pale green ones.

\_"\*\*"What are you\*\* \*\*doing?"\*\* \_Her tone was just slightly less icy today, like maybe 5 degrees warmer. I took that as a good sign.

\*\*\_"Um, you know, stuff." \_\*\*

\*\*\_"Shouldn't you be getting ready for the raid?"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Shouldn't\_\_ you?"\_\*\* I said brusquely. I immediately stiffened.

Ebony's tail flicked imperceptibly behind her, and she narrowed her eyes and started to lean toward me ominously.

I tried to keep from leaning back too much to not make her think I was any weaker than she thought I was, and Ebony started to open her mouth to deliver some scathing remark-

Firewing bounded through the doorway into the little section of rock that had been deserted except for Ebony and me, and startled into stopping.

At lightning speed his eyes zipped around the room, realizing that we were alone, that our heads were probably only a paw-length away from each other's, and that Ebony's mouth was slightly open.

Firewing's mouth completely fell open.

\*\*\_"I'll um, leave you to, uh, that," \_\*\*Firewing stuttered, and ran out the doorway as fast as he could.

Ebony immediately jumped away from me like she'd been stung. She looked at me curtly. \*\*\_"Stay out of my way."\_\*\*She swept out after Firewing.

\_Ohh, she's so going to make me pay for that, \_I thought glumly.

\* \* \*

><p>I studied the Viking landscape, dotted with fires. I took aim and shot a plasma blast at a catapult, which collapsed in flaming pieces of wood and stone.<p>

Ebony swooped next to me and laughed. \_\*\*"Is that all you can do?"\*\* \_she taunted. She aimed for another catapult- just before a Viking loaded it and started to aim.

I gasped and jerked instinctively, smashing into Ebony. Surprised, she rolled over trying to regain her balance, but she only collided with me again dizzily. \*\*\_"What was that for?" \_\*\*she growled as she tried to right herself. \*\*\_"The Viking wasn't pointing it anywhere near-"\_\*\*

\_\*\*"Ah."\*\* \_I looked up to see Firewing, staring at us flying \_really \_close together. \_\*\*"I'll, uh, just, you know-"\*\* \_he fled quickly.

Ebony stared after him disgustedly. Pausing to throw me a scorching glare- a real Ebony deluxe- she dashed away to her friends.

I stared after her. \_I'm never going to live this down.\_

\* \* \*



\_\*\*"-and have you told your father yet because boy, is he gonna be-""\*\*\_

\_\*\*"FIREWING!""\*\* \_I shouted, wincing when the sound echoed through the nest. Firewing sat back on his haunches, looking at me sulkily.

\*\*\_"What," \_\*\*he said sullenly.

\_\*\*"We weren't doing anything like that! I was kind of arguing with Ebony, and I yelled at her, sort of, and she was about to yell at me!""\*\*\_

\_\*\*"Oh.""\*\* \_Firewing started have a very ominous kind of expression on his face.\_  
><em>

\*\*\_"What is it?" \_\*\*

Firewing shifted his paws around for an exasperatingly long time.  
\*\*\_"Your-dad-arranged-so-that-you-and-Ebony-would-do-food-duty-together."\_\*\* Firewing blurted out all in one breath.

For a second I just stare at him dumbly.  
Then-

\*\*\_"WHAT?"\_\*\*

Firewing cringed slightly. \*\*\_"I told him about...it...and he seemed really happy and went to change the schedule so you two would be together. Tomorrow afternoon," \_\*\*he added.

I groaned and leaned against the sloped cave wall. \*\*\_"What am I going to do? We'll start arguing within a minute!"\_\*\*I said.

\*\*\_"Thirty seconds,"\_\*\*Firewing offered brightly. I threw him a look. Unfazed, he continued, \*\*\_"And, as a warning, your dad probably won't let you change it. He's convinced that you'll be mated next month. When I left he was picking out your nest site."\_\*\*\_

\*\*\_"And we all know whose fault that is,"\_\*\*I said dryly. \*\*\_"See you tomorrow, if Ebony doesn't kill me."\_\*\*I slipped into the Night Fury cave system. Everything was quiet, until-

\_\*\*"Nott!""\*\* \_Quickly, a dragon pushed me forcefully into an narrow cave- again. Before I could speak, my dad-because of course it was him-interrupted me.

\*\*\_"Nott-I'm-so-happy-for-you-I-like-Ebony-she's-a-nice-dragon-and-she's-a-good-choice-speaking-of-choices-I-found-your-future-cave-and-it's-perfect-come-and-see-"\_\*\*

He jumped energetically and pulled me by the paw to a dark, desolate cave flooded with water and stalactites.

\*\*\_"I-know-it-doesn't-look-like-much-but-we-can-fix-it-up-and-then-it'll-be-like-new-although-I-suppose-you-can't-have-a-new-cave-but-anyway-"\_\*\*

I opened my mouth, but he cut me off again.

\_\*\*"You-know-it-reminds-me-of-how-I-and-your-mother-met-because-""\*\*

\_He broke off. \*\*\_"Your mother..."\_\*\*he said slowly.

I swallowed my pride; I hadn't seen Dad this joyful since Mom died. I couldn't ruin this for him. \*\*\_"That's...great, Dad,"\_\*\*I said weakly.

He beamed at me. \*\*\_"I knew you'd like it!"\_\*\*Without a second's delay, he started nudging me back into our cave. \*\*\_"You'd better go to bed now,"\_\*\*he exclaimed. \*\*\_"Don't want to be sleepy tomorrow and disappoint your new fiancée!"\_\*\* \_He winked at me and curled into his nest. I sighed, quietly so he wouldn't hear, and did the same.

\* \* \*

><p>I woke up to a beam of sunlight shining directly in my eye. Blinking furiously, I stood up and shook myself. A big pit of dread sat, rock hard, in my stomach. Today was the day where I had to fish with <em>Ebony</em>.

For a second I considered just not going. I squashed the thought. \_Dad will be so disappointed, \_I reminded myself.

With a sense of foreboding, I stepped outside. Reliably, Dad immediately popped up beside me. \*\*\_"Hi, how are you feeling?"\_\*\*\_he said cheerily.

\_\*\*"Good,"\_\*\* \_I said flatly as I picked a fish from the pile. Dad snatched up a herring so fast he nearly dropped it. I stifled a stab of annoyance; he was acting like a hatchling at his first flight class.

I picked up a silvery fish on the very edge of pile, and started to aimlessly walk away, hoping that Dad wouldn't follow me.

He did.

\_\*\*"What kind of wedding do you want? Because I was thinking that with your green eyes and her blue ones, we could go for a kind of under-the-sea theme, but then again, it would be boring to only have regular fish, and it's so hard to catch exotic things like puffer fish, don't you agree?"\_\*\*\_

He started talking again without bothering to hear my answer.

\*\*\_"Hmmm, we get things like starfish and anemones, but not mussels, those are so hard to pry off rocks, you know? On the other hand, though, I'd think that clams would be worth the effort if we could just find \_\_a\_\_ PEARL..."\_\*\*

I tried to tune it out, but it was no use. The sound drilled unrelentingly into my ears.

\*\*\_"But then again, maybe we should do a forest thing, since green is like the leaves and grass and stuff, and her name is Ebony, which is a type of wood, but it's kind of rare, so I don't think we could find enough-EBONY!"\_\*\*

\*\*\_"Well, you don't have to shout..."\_\*\*

\*\*\_"No, there's Ebony-right over there!"\_ \*\*Dad started to bounce, literally \_bounce\_, over to Ebony, who was cleaning her tail scales on the other side of the Night Fury section. Her head snapped up, startled. She blinked and watched my dad approach, her head bobbing up and down to follow my dad's movement.

\*\*\_"HI!"\_\*\*Dad said embarrassingly loudly. I cringed, but he seem pleased with himself. \*\*\_"You should probably be going!"\_\*\*Ebony frowned like she was going to argue, but for some reason she seemed unwilling to. \_If only she'd do that for me, \_I thought sulkily.\*\*\_

><em>\*\*

Squirming, she started to inch away slowly. That is, until she spotted me. Immediately she scowled. I recognized that look and cowered slightly, but suddenly Dad materialized behind me and pushed me forward. I stumbled and nearly crashed into Ebony, but she stepped backward at the last second and I fell in front of her. She glared at me from above, like she was saying, \_Don't even think about it.\_

\_Don't worry, I'm not thinking anything, \_I mentally assured her.

\*\*\_"Well, I'd better get going!"\_ \*\*Dad declared. \*\*\_"Got some \_stuff \_to do."\_\*\*He gave me an exaggerated wink and flew off. I sighed in relief, which quickly evaporated.

Ebony considered me disdainfully. \*\*\_"Let's just get this over with,"\_\*\*she said, rolling her eyes. She took off without waiting for me, which was fine. Us flying together would only spawn rumors, if they didn't already exist.

I overtook her quickly, which she seemed to regard as a heinous crime by the way she reacted.

Fluttering her wings at an annoyed, fast sort of way, she muttered something under her breath and sped ahead. Again I caught up with her, but just before I stopped she spun around in midair. I flared my wings quickly and ground to a halt. She regarded me with an expression that could be called \_malevolent.\_\_\_

><em>

\_\*\*"Let's establish some rules first,"\*\*\_ \_she said in a commanding tone. I opened my mouth and she shot me with a withering glare, her eyes burning. If looks were Nadder spikes, I'd be very pointy right now. My mouth closed with a snap.

She seemed to build herself up a bit before speaking. \_\*\*"Don't annoy me,"\*\*\_ \_she said shortly, narrowing her eyes. \*\*\_"Although I suppose everything you do falls under that category."\_\*\*She whisked back around, the edge of her tail slapping me in the face. She stopped. \*\*\_"Already,"\_\*\*she said, the word packed full of raw disgust. Without pausing again, she pushed her wings against the warm, thick, afternoon air and flew to the west.

\* \* \*

><p>Ebony flew. I followed. She didn't check to see if I was still behind her, which was fine with me.<p>

Eventually, she arrived at a small island, with an even smaller cove. \*\*\_"The fish gather here because not many dragons come this way," \_\*\*she said, her voice echoing slightly against the walls of the cove. \_I didn't ask, \_I thought rebelliously.

Deftly, she unfolded the net and laid it out on the sand. Glancing at me so quickly I thought I'd imagined it, she dived smoothly into the water. I waited a bit before following her so that we wouldn't run into one another underwater. Soon I was back in the sea, where all I ever had to do was catch fish. I let out a sigh of relief.

The sun moved as the pile of fish grew. Ebony had placed the net under a cliff wall so that our catch was properly shaded. It was rare that we were both on land at the same time, and even when that happened we carried out our business silently.

Fish. Surface. Drop fish. Repeat.

Eventually at noon, I paused on the beach, taking the time to rest. The pile of fish gleamed temptingly in the sun. I checked the water's surface- no Ebony. Quietly, I stooped to pick up a fish-

A small noise sounded behind me and I spun around, dropping the fish. I relaxed- it was only a bubble popping at the surface. Relieved, I stated to turn again, when more bubbles appeared- a real cloud of them. Hesitatingly, I walked to the edge of the water and peered into it. A thought struck me. Should Ebony have been here by now?

I didn't wait any longer. I jumped into the water, trying to get as deep as I could. The salt stung my eyes as I forced them open.

\_Thump.\_

The noise came out of the depths, more of a vibration than a real sound, like something was thrashing hard against the sea floor. \_Ebony?\_

\_Thump. Thump.\_

I turned wildly, trying to pinpoint it. My wings felt sore from fishing.

\_Thumpthumpthump.\_

Louder now, and quicker. Swimming downward, the bottom of the cove came into sharper focus. I squinted into the cloudy distance- was that a dark patch?

\_Thumpthump.\_

The thumping suddenly ceased. Ignoring my aching lungs, I sped up-

And slammed into a huge black mass- I couldn't see any other details as my eyes blurred. Not knowing if I was at the right place, I scratched the creature. A deep growl rumbled through the water.

Sparks fizzed and popped at the edge of my vision. I didn't have any time. I gasped, and-

Ignition.

Fire, glorious \_fire \_burst from my mouth. The creature screeched and screamed away. By the fading light of the flames, I saw a limp, dark form. I hooked my arm around the form, the hot water propelling me to the surface-

I landed on the sand, coughing up water. Slowly, I staggered to my feet. Ebony did the same. Her eyes immediately alighted on the fish. The fish that I'd dropped, carelessly, onto the sand. She stared at it.

Then, she pushed it easily back onto the pile. She was quiet for a moment, then-

\*\*\_"Thanks."\_\*\*

It was small, barely audible. I shifted my paws, struck dumb by her sudden reversal. Saying \_thanks \_was strange enough, but ignoring me eating a fish on duty was nothing short of astonishing.

We sat there for a couple minutes in an extremely awkward silence.

\_\*\*"So, um...what happened?"\*\*\_ I shifted my paws around, not really looking at her.

More silence.

Ebony cleared her throat. \*\*\_"I went to the very bottom because I thought I saw a fish down there. There was a kind of underwater cave near there, and a tentacle shot out of it..."\_\*\*

Oh. I remembered my dad telling us stories of a great, slimy beast that lived in underwater caves, preying on anything that came close. I hadn't been really paying attention, and he'd stopped talking anyway when Eclipse had declared that \_she \_wasn't afraid of any old sea creature, and ran to jump in the ocean to prove it, closely followed by Onyx.

\*\*\_"Well, I guess we better get this back."\_\*\*Ebony said, moving to pick up one of the corners of the net. I did likewise, and we carried it out of the cove slowly.

I avoided looking at Ebony on the way back, shifting my gaze around the dark blue ocean on all sides. The ocean that was precisely the same shade of azure as Ebony's eyes.

Not helping. At all.

We finally arrived at the small ledge on the tip of the nest, reserved for dragons with food to push down the tiny, tilted opening leading down to the pile at the bottom of it. After dumping it all down the chute, Ebony muttered an unintelligible couple of words, possibly a good night, and flew quickly over to the main entrance.

I was completely astonished. When we'd left an hour or two ago, Ebony



had shown every sign of an unrivaled disgust of me.

Turns out all I had to do was save her life.

I shivered slightly in the rapidly cooling night air, gently blowing the smell of salt in from the sea, and went to join Ebony inside.

## 9. Chapter 9

### Chapter Nine

**\*\*A/N: \*ground rumbles\*\*\***

**\*\*\*explodes out of the ground\* I'M ALLLLLLIIIIIVVVVEEE!\*\*\***

**\*\*Seriously though, I can't imagine how all of you got by for the past eight months of me doing nothing. I'm so sorry! Things just seemed to stack up one after another, and then they kept stacking up (like Tetris, except I can't play Tetris).\*\***

**\*\*To PhantomBookworm: Thanks! It was your review that suddenly got me motivated to write again (not that everyone else's reviews weren't encouraging too!).\*\***

**\*\*It's been so long since I actually got down and wrote that I've forgotten a bit of what I was planning to do, although I still have all the major plot points mapped out. Sorry this chapter's so short while I try to get back into the swing of things. :)\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>After the fishing incident, things seemed easier between me and Ebony- if not treating me like a week-old fish could be considered easier. Instead, it was replaced by a grudging tolerance, as well as a near-constant silence now that she wasn't inclined to abuse me. Food duty was almost unbearable, as she communicated almost totally with brief nods and gestures. Sometimes I didn't know what was worse.<p>

My father, however seemed to take it as a good sign.

**\_"\*\*"Nott!"\*\*\_ He panted slightly, catching up to me. \*\*\_"Have you seen Firewing?"\_\*\***

My ears perked up, quickly detecting the absence of the **\_E\_**-word. I turned to greet him. **\_"\*\*"I think I saw him heading out to Fir Island a couple hours ago to find some herbs. Why?"\*\*\_**

**\_"\*\*"Oh, I'm glad you asked! I had a new idea about Ebony!"\*\*\_ I felt my ears slowly droop down again as he leaned in secretively. \_\*\*"It's still just an idea, but I think your friend could really help make it work! It involves..."\*\*\_**

I sat as he kept chattering on, my tail flicking impatiently. Something struck me as I watched my father. How long could I really let this go on?

As if to save me, I felt Ebony's cold presence behind me like a

sudden breeze. I cut in randomly. \_\*\*"And speaking of that, we were just about leave on...food duty!"\*\*\_ I wheeled around to see Ebony, surprise briefly crossing her features at being discovered. \_She wouldn't just come up to me unless we had food duty, right?! \_"Right, Ebony?"

Recovering, she nodded slowly. \_\*\*"We should be going,"\*\*\_ she said abruptly, turning.

\_\*\*"Oh! Well, I'll see you later!"\*\*\_ my father said cheerily as we took off, leaving him behind.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Father's POV<strong>

I watched silently as the two dragons flew out to sea, their sheer speed causing slight trails to form on the water's surface.

My ear twitched as Moon came up next to me, sitting down as she followed my gaze. For a moment she was quiet. \_\*\*"Aren't you pushing them too much about this?"\*\*\_

I glanced at the deep blue dragon, before turning back to the horizon.

\_\*\*"The raids have been getting more dangerous lately,"\*\*\_ I said darkly, shifting my stance. \_\*\*"Jet...was only part of a larger pattern of all the casualties we've had recently; the Vikings are getting smarter."\*\*\_ I studied the clouds tensely. \_\*\*"And with him on so many raids now...I want him to be able to experience as much as possible."\*\*\_

Moon looked at me, her expression inscrutable. \_\*\*"Is that all?"\*\*\_

I relaxed slightly. \_\*\*"Well, that and they'd be a perfect couple,"\*\*\_ I said jokingly. Moon laughed dryly. There was another pause.

Sighing again, \_\*\*"I don't know, though..."\*\*\_ I looked back out at the horizon. \_\*\*"Maybe he'll live longer than I think he might. Nott's special, after all."\*\*\_

Moon's gaze was fixed on the two dragons, now a pair of black smudges on the horizon.

\_\*\*"Yes...he is."\*\*\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: I'll try to get the next chapter up as soon as I can, before the end of the week if I can help it. (because I have low standards) Without spoiling anything, it'll go into what Nott/Toothless and Ebony do after they leave (hint: they weren't actually scheduled for food duty. Make of that what you will).\*\*

\*\* See you soon!\*\*

End  
file.